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Placement Testing in English and Mathematics at Ohio State University

By FRANK R. PETERS

THE program of placement tests in mathematics and English at Ohio State University has been reviewed and revised during the past year.[1] The following paper tells briefly the direction of the changes, describes the 1957 mathematics placement tests, and reports the performance and placement of the freshman class during the fall quarter.

The reasons for placement programs are well recognized. The transition from high school to college creates some difficult problems for each student. The members of a typical freshman class come from a number of different high schools. Consequently, they differ among themselves in their readiness and ability to undertake college work. In mathematics and English, for example, some students are prepared to start advanced work immediately; others need additional study before undertaking regular college courses.

A placement program should be designed to identify such differences so that each student may be placed at the level where he will profit most. It is a waste of time, money, and human resources for the student to undertake a course which he cannot master. It is equally wasteful for him to take a course which is comprised of matters which he has already mastered. If appropriate placement can be made, such waste can be reduced.

There are practical limits to placement programs. This is especially true in our present system of higher education. Effective placement depends upon two conditions: a known and well-defined sequence of studies, and some way of placing students in that sequence at levels suited to their preparation. The great diversification of college curriculums limits the fulfillment

[1] The Departments of English and Mathematics and the University Counseling and Testing Center of Ohio State University have jointly taken the responsibility for the development of this program.

of the first condition. The administrative difficulties of placing students except at quarter or semester intervals sharply limits the fulfillment of the second condition. If a student is almost, but not quite, ready to undertake the second quarter of a sequence, he usually must retake all of the first-quarter course even though much of the work is review for him. In English and mathematics at Ohio State the first condition is sufficiently fulfilled to enable some differential placement.

All Ohio State students are required to complete the first-year English sequence in composition and reading (English 416, 417, 418). The English placement test is designed to determine whether the student is prepared to undertake the first or second course of this sequence. If his ability (as measured by the test) is high, he is placed in English 417 and granted credit for English 416. In addition, he is given the opportunity to earn immediate credit for English 417 by writing an essay examination offered by the English Department. On the other hand, if from a student's performance on the initial test it appears extremely doubtful that he can successfully master English 416, he is required to take English 400, a course in which the elements of composition are intensively reviewed. This course carries an extra fee and adds to the hours required for graduation.

The present placement-testing program in English has been in effect for a number of years.[2] The test currently used has been markedly effective in placing students, so far as we can tell from class performance. The test, however, does not directly reflect the tasks presented in the freshman English sequence, composition and reading, since it consists largely of items testing knowledge of formal rules of grammar, and the meaning and spelling of words out of context. In developing the new test, therefore, we are changing to a new form of item, one which more nearly presents the student with the kinds of problems in mechanics, grammar, and rhetoric which he must master in his actual reading and writing.[3] The new test is patterned after the General Educational Development Test One, "Correctness and Effectiveness of Expression," devised by the United States Armed Forces Insti-

[2] *See* Frank M. Fletcher, Jr., and William H. Hildreth, "The Evaluation of an English Placement Test," EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH BULLETIN, XXVIII (January 19, 1949), pp. 7–17, 27–28.

[3] For a more detailed description of the first-year English sequence and a sample of items similar to those being developed for the placement test, *see* the pamphlet *Freshman English at the Ohio State University*. This pamphlet is available in limited supply from the Department of English, Ohio State University, Columbus 10, Ohio.

tute, and is presently being given to freshman classes on an experimental basis. In addition, in 1958 each student will be required to write a short theme as a part of his placement test.

THE placement problem in mathematics is more complex than that in English. First of all, a majority of Ohio State students have no college mathematics in their programs. In addition, mathematics courses for students of engineering and for students in the College of Arts and Sciences are not the same. The only uniform requirement now applying to all students is that they meet certain minimum requirements in arithmetic and elementary high-school algebra.[4] In general, this requirement is based on the principle that certain minimal competence is necessary for dealing with quantitative concepts and problems encountered in fields other than mathematics or the physical sciences.

The mathematics placement tests, in their earlier form, consisted of two parts. Part I was designed to identify students who were unable to handle relatively simple problems in arithmetic and elementary algebra. If the student's score was very low on Part I, he was required to take the review course in mathematics fundamentals (Math. 400). Like English 400, this course carries an extra fee and increases the hours required for graduation. Part II was designed to determine whether students whose curriculum included college mathematics were sufficiently advanced to undertake the first quarter course in college mathematics (Math. 416 or 421). For this purpose, problems in more advanced high-school algebra were used. If such students scored low on Part II, they were required to take an intensive review course in high-school algebra (Math. 401) before being allowed to register for college courses in mathematics.[5]

Although the prior test effectively identified students who needed additional preparatory work, it did not recognize those students whose preparation would qualify them to move directly into more advanced courses. In 1955–56, however, a group of engineering students whose placement-test scores were very high were invited to take a specially prepared proficiency examination. Of 104 students who took this examination, 28 were granted proficiency credit for the first course in the engineering mathe-

[4] This requirement is made by the member colleges of the University. Only in the last few years has it been made uniform for all the colleges.

[5] For a more detailed description of freshman mathematics and the placement tests, *see* the pamphlet *Freshman Mathematics at the Ohio State University*. It is available in limited supply from the Department of Mathematics, Ohio State University, Columbus 10, Ohio.

matics sequence (Math. 421).[6] Five of these students were also granted credit for the second course (Math. 422), and assigned to a calculus course (Math. 440). Only five of the 28 students advanced in this experimental program received less than *A* or *B* in their advanced mathematics course. One student received a *D* and four received *C*. This special program was repeated in 1956–57, when 25 engineering students were placed directly in Math. 422, and 3 were placed in Math. 440.

With this history it was decided that the mathematics placement test should be revised so that decisions about both unpreparedness and proficiency could be made. It was necessary that such a revised test sample a broader range of problems and consequently be longer and more difficult. A longer and more difficult examination, however, would not tell us anything additional about the student who needed Math. 400; consequently the examination was split. One form (G-2) was essentially similar to Part I of the prior test. Students whose planned programs did not include college mathematics were given G-2 only. If the student correctly answered fewer than 15 of the 33 arithmetic and elementary algebra problems included, he was required to add Math. 400 to his program. A score of 15 or higher excused the student from this additional requirement. All students whose college program required mathematics and the students who planned to elect a college mathematics course were given the alternate form, G-3. This examination, although it included some of the items from G-2, consisted primarily of algebra problems, among these a number of items like those encountered in advanced high-school algebra and first quarter college algebra. If a student answered fewer than 23 of 50 items correctly, he was assigned to Math. 401, the review course for students needing college mathematics. The student who scored 40 or above was granted credit for Math. 421. If the student's score was very low, his paper was rescored on the very elementary items to determine whether he should be assigned to Math. 400.[7]

[6] Four other students scored high enough to earn proficiency credit but they elected to take the first course anyway.

[7] Differences in the two first courses in college mathematics (416 in the College of Arts and Sciences and 421 in the College of Engineering) made it difficult to use the examination for proficiency in both. This year Arts College students who received scores of 40 or more on test G-3 were given proficiency credit in Math. 421 and assigned to Math. 422. Courses 416 and 421 are undergoing revision and next year both courses will include topics from algebra and trigonometry. In subsequent years it is expected that the placement test will include some trigonometry and that proficiency credit can be granted in either 421 or 416.

Those students who scored 40 or higher on G-3 (proficiency in Math. 421) were given another examination on the fundamentals of trigonometry (G-4). If the student's score on this examination was sufficiently high, he was placed in the third course in the engineering-mathematics sequence (Math. 440) and was given credit for both Math. 421 and 422.

Finally, an hour-long test in mathematics reasoning (G-1) was given to all entering students. The results of this test will be used in studying the success of students in mathematics and related fields and in testing new items for future mathematics placement tests.

PERHAPS the most difficult problem in any placement program is that of judging the level of performance necessary for undertaking one course rather than another, or the quality of performance which is sufficient to warrant proficiency credit. In short, how does one set cutting scores? We need not explore this complex problem here except to reaffirm the fact that, whatever evidence one uses, the setting of critical scores, like the assigning of marks, is at best a matter of informed judgment.

For the English test the proficiency score was set in 1950 at the 89th-percentile level of performance. The critical score, the score below which students are required to take English 400, was set at the 15th percentile, using this same class as the normative group. The premise was then that the top 12 per cent of entrants were sufficiently prepared to undertake English 417, while the lowest 15 per cent of incoming students would need additional help before undertaking the first course, 416. This judgment was based on the experience of the English Department with other freshman classes.

In setting cutting scores for the new mathematics tests several sources of evidence were examined. The critical score on G-2, the score below which all students are required to take Math. 400, was set to approximate the score on the former mathematics placement test. Since the balance of the tests was markedly changed, however, other evidence was needed to set cutting scores on those tests. For this purpose G-3 was given as a part of the final examination to Spring Quarter classes in Math. 401 and 421, and G-4 was similarly given to classes in Math. 422. The critical score on G-3, the score below which students are required to take Math. 401 before taking regular college mathematics

courses, was set at about the level of performance of students receiving *E* in Math. 421. The proficiency score, the score above which students could be granted proficiency credit for 421, was set at approximately the mean test performance level of *B* students in Math. 421. On G-4 the proficiency score was set at the mean performance level of all students completing Math. 422 who were tested.

TABLE I

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RATINGS ON THE ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST MADE BY THE FRESHMEN IN THE FALL OF 1957

Course	Number	Per Cent
(1)	(2)	(3)
English 400.....	713	16.2
English 416.....	3,112	70.8
English 417.....	573	13.0
English 418.....	....*	....
Total.....	4,398	100.0

* Fourteen students tried for proficiency out of English 417. Four of them were given proficiency credit for English 417.

TABLE II

THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RATINGS ON THE MATHEMATICS PLACEMENT TESTS MADE BY THE FRESHMEN IN THE FALL OF 1957

Course	Number	Per Cent*	Course	Number	Per Cent*
(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Non-Mathematics Students†			Mathematics Students‡		
Required to take Math. 400§.....	1,167	25.5	Math. 400§.....	216	4.7
			Math. 401.....	1,008	22.1
Excused from Math. 400.....	1,063	23.3	Math. 416-421	1,029	22.5
			Math. 422.....	74	1.6
			Math. 440.....	11	0.2
			Total.....	4,568	100.0

* Percentages of the total number of Freshmen tested.
† A student whose college program as planned did not include courses in mathematics.
‡ A student whose college program included courses in mathematics.
§ The total number of students (non-mathematics and mathematics) placed in Math. 400 was 1,383; that is, 30 per cent of those tested.

THERE were over forty-five hundred Freshmen who took the English and mathematics placement tests in the fall of 1957. Table I shows the ratings of the students who took the English placement classified by their test performance. A similar classification of the Freshmen who took the mathematics placement test is given in Table II.

Of the 4,398 students who took the English placement test, 16.2 per cent (713 students) were placed in English 400. A substantially higher percentage of students (30 per cent) were placed in Math. 400. In addition, 1,008 students planning to take college mathematics were placed in Math. 401. On the other side of the scale, 573 students (13 per cent) received a proficiency rating and were assigned to English 417 and 85 students (1.8 per cent) received proficiency placement in mathematics. Eleven of the latter 85 placed out of both Math. 421 and 422.

These results raise several issues which we can only suggest. First, we view as of utmost importance the fact that so many students were placed in advanced courses and received proficiency credit. If we assume that these placements were not often in error, this represents a great saving of time both for the staff and the students and makes possible potentially greater achievement on the part of these students. Could more students be advanced? This is a question which we need to explore. But we know that some of these students will fail to make the grade in the advanced course whereas they might have succeeded if they had started with the first course. This is the cost of advancement which must be weighed against the fact that many other students, if placed in the first course, would face problems they had already mastered. Consequently, we would be wasting time and inviting boredom.

The other extreme, the large number of students who seem to need additional instruction before undertaking the first college courses also creates serious problems. Are the first courses too difficult? Certainly, few of the faculty involved would agree to this assertion. Can a better way to give help to these students be found than to charge them a quarter's time (and a nominal fee) and the staff a substantial teaching load? Such questions are illustrative, not exhaustive, of issues which generate out of the general problem of transition from high school to college.

The placement program, in this university, is an attempt to deal with the obvious fact that this transition is of different magnitude and kind for different students. In the subject areas of mathematics and English this program can, if successful, make the gap manageable for students, both those who might otherwise find the new work too easy or others who might find it too difficult.

Some Observations on Sign Language

By BEN M. SCHOWE, JR.

Oh, so you are a teacher at the deaf school? You don't talk on your hands any more up there, do you?" My face must have shown some shock of surprise for the speaker went on after a brief pause, "You teach the children to talk and read the lips, isn't that it?" By the time we had reached our turns to get auto license plates I had explained how things were at our school. It turned out that the man whom I had been talking with was a physician. I thought to myself, "That fellow should know more than to ask me a question as he did . . . on the other hand, perhaps even a physician can be a layman as far as teaching the deaf is concerned."

It is true that most people have been told much about the way deaf children can be taught to talk and read the lips. They seldom hear that sign language exists in all schools for deaf children. In spite of the fact that sign language is suppressed in many schools because it is believed to prevent a deaf child from learning to speak and from becoming a good lip-reader, it still exists in every one of them.

Recently, we have begun to hear of increasingly more people who are studying the unsuppressible phenomenon of sign language. The late Sir Richard Paget,[1] an English philologist, with the help of others, went so far as to devise a

> . . . New Sign Language [which] should give to the young deaf child a grasp of verbal language, a greatly increased vocabulary and consequent increased power of normal thinking, together with a greater facility for reading and writing and for the still more difficult art of lip-reading. The process of learning the New Sign Language should be as effortless to both teacher and pupil as the acquisition of speech is to a hearing child. With its dependence on pantomimic signs, its use should also appreciably increase the child's power of observation and description.[2]

[1] Sir Richard Paget is the author of the books *Human Speech: Some Observations, Experiments, and Conclusions as to the Nature, Origin, Purpose and Possible Improvement of Human Speech* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1930) and *This English* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Company, Ltd., 1935).

[2] Paget, Sir Richard. *The Children's Vocabulary of the New Sign Language. Notes for Teachers.* London: Wellcome Foundation Ltd., no date given, pp. 3–4. Besides this booklet, there is a manual describing 900 signs, four film strips showing 160 static signs, and a motion picture showing 330 signs. Inquiries for purchase of this material should be addressed to Phonetics Department, University College, Gower Street, London, W. C. 1. The Visual Aids Laboratory at Ohio State University has all of these but the motion pictures.

Another Englishman, Kenneth W. Hodgson, author of an excellent book *The Deaf and Their Problems* has this to say,

> . . . to give a small deaf child the spate of living language which catches up a hearing infant into the whirl of life is obviously extremely difficult. . . . systemized conventional signing in the early years . . . forms a secondary channel of communication, by-passing the obstacle of speech deficiency. . . . To repress such an auxiliary means of communication is mental cruelty, as serious as sealing the lips of a hearing child to stop him from talking. But if this temporary language of expediency is to be normally verbal, it must be taught.
> . . . the "New Sign Language," invented by Sir Richard Paget, the greatest living authority on human speech . . . [is a] most recent contribution to the problem of language for little deaf children [which] forms, if not the solution to the problem, at least a basis for research and experiment. . . . This dispute over teaching method has been an unprofitable business. Both sides in the "War of the Systems" have puffed up their case, flinging every argument, however unfit, into the firing-line, till the very causes have become hazy and half-forgotten. Now is the time for parley. An impartial inquiry may well stimulate progress and heal the bitterness among the critics of the schools.[3]

The fact that Paget and Hodgson are British, where schools are reputedly all purely "oral," gives proof that the interest in the possibilities of sign language as an educational tool is a strong one.

Lee Meyerson indicated that deaf children who learn to use sign language early in life demonstrate a clear superiority in learning to speak over the children who do not use the sign language in infancy. He found this to be true by matching a group of deaf children of deaf parents, who used sign language, with a group of deaf children whose parents were of normal hearing and did not use signs. He gave identical oral instruction to both groups and made tape recordings of their speech progress. He then asked experienced teachers of the deaf to grade the speech progress of all the children from the recordings. The achievement and progress in speech made by the children of deaf parents was better than that made by the children of non-signing hearing parents.[4]

[3] Hodgson, Kenneth W. *The Deaf and Their Problems: a Study in Special Education*. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1954, pp. 340–41.

[4] Author of two articles in *Psychology of Exceptional Children and Youth*, edited by William M. Cruickshank. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955. (Prentice-Hall Psychology Series).

A LINGUIST in Holland, Bernard T. Tervoort, wrote his doctoral thesis on the study of the structure of the sign language that deaf children used in communicating among themselves. While he was taking motion pictures of his eleven- to thirteen-year-old Dutch children talking among themselves and analyzing the syntax of their language, William C. Stokoe, Jr., a professor at Gallaudet College, was preparing a prospectus to make a similar study, "Structural Analysis of the Language of Signs," using deaf students of Gallaudet College. Mr. Tervoort's dissertation is not available to us at the moment but Mr. Stokoe's prospectus lists many uses of his proposed research. These applications ranged from "How can the grammar of signs be used to improve the user's speech and writing and understanding?" to "Sociologists as well as linguistic scientists . . . will welcome any results of scientific study of the language of signs, which is both an interesting symbol system and an unexplored social instrument." He mentions the use that psychologists, philosophers, logicians, and neurologists as well as educators might make of the data from such a study.

About the same time, and closely related to the thinking and work of Tervoort and of Stokoe, I was making a pilot-study observation of the sign communication of first-year pupils at the Ohio School for the Deaf whose parents were of normal hearing and did not use signs. Not needing the aid of motion pictures for observing the meager beginning sign language of the first-year children, I made notes and described attempts of four deaf boys to communicate with other children or adults over a period of a school year while under my observation.[5]

I was interested mostly in observing the first growth of a deaf child's spontaneous communication. It may be assumed that more knowledge of the nature of the growth of early sign language will show its true value as a tool in teaching deaf children. We may even be able to prove that sign language is a necessary developmental stage in the growth of language arts for the deaf child.

Several interesting facts and data supporting further intensive and prolonged observation of young deaf children resulted from this pilot study:

1. Young deaf children do not appear to communicate with each other as much as one might suppose.

[5] Schowe, Ben M., Jr. "Sign Language Development." 1955. A Master's thesis on file in the library of Ohio State University.

2. The spontaneous communication of these children does not seem to pattern itself after the vocabulary and speech training they receive in the classroom.
3. The children are able to convey meaning through sign language quite well when they do attempt to communicate.
4. Growth in sign language is an untutored development which receives nurture from association of first-year children with older children who, in turn, receive their skill in the language from the children before them.

One wonders how any system of language communication could prosper under such conditions of untutored growth. Among the suggestions for future observation growing out of this study, is one which calls for around-the-clock observation by a team of observers to obtain a more complete picture of spontaneous communication of these first-year children.

Signs were very usable despite their bastard origin and general neglect by educators for many years. There is indication they are a dynamic force in the development of the language of the deaf child of which educators should take advantage. Reasonably well-developed sign language can contribute to a better adjusted deaf child who is capable of greater academic achievement.

Finally, the study suggests ways in which further investigation can be carried out in a school. Curriculum adjustments might be warranted to take advantage of the natural sign language of the deaf in developing reading, writing, and finally, speech and lip-reading.

IN CHAPTERS dealing with history of education of deaf children, methods of language development, origin of sign language, and modern studies of educational methods, the study indicates much evidence that sign language needs to be studied. James L. Smith wrote, in 1902,

> . . . the . . . comparison . . . proves that congenitally deaf children, from two to four years under instruction in an atmosphere of signs, may use English freer from "mutisms" than an oral pupil taught ten years without signs.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . signs, judiciously used, not only do not interfere with learning English, but even favor it.[6]

[6] Smith, James L. "The Abuse of the Sign-Language," *American Annals of the Deaf*, XLVII (March, 1902), pp. 175, 176.

Alexander Melville Bell pointed out in 1833 there was evidence that beginning with oral instruction "impedes the progress of the congenitally deaf."[7]

The hearing child's language development has been studied by many people. Nearly all of them recognize gestures as essential in the early stages of language development and some suggest that this stage is by-passed too rapidly. Reference to some of these authorities has been mentioned by Dorothea McCarthy in her studies of language development in children.[8] MacDonald Critchley, a neurologist, said of the training of young children, "Gestures, like speech, may therefore be regarded as a dynamic and living subject which has not achieved finality in respect of development."[9]

It is clear there is much we need to know of ways to teach deaf children and there are some ways we have forgotten about. Moreover, confining our study to one way to the exclusion of another is hardly professional or even intelligent.

It is difficult, at this time, to know of all the latest research that may be going on concerning the teaching of deaf children. There has never been any question about the existence of sign language. As a means of communication among adult deaf, sign language has proved to be without peer. The gratifying thing is that it appears, now, that sign language is going to be scientifically scrutinized and perhaps ways can be found to turn it into a positive and respectable teaching tool. [Vol. XXXVII, No. 5]

THE National Education Association is soon to distribute a report of its year-long study entitled "Finding and Educating the Academically Talented Student." The report will give the recommendations of the invitational conference of two hundred educators of which Mr. Conant was chairman:

1. A solid four-year high-school course of academic subjects
2. A rigorous counseling program
3. Provision within the regular high school for advanced work
4. Advanced work for talented students on lower grade levels

[7] *Upon a Method of Teaching Language to a Very Young Congenitally Deaf Child.* Washington, D.C.: Gibson Brothers, 1833.

[8] McCarthy, Dorothea A. *The Language Development of the Preschool Child.* Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1930 (Institute of Child Welfare, Monograph Series No. IV).

[9] Critchley, MacDonald. *The Language of Gesture.* London: Edward Arnold and Company, 1939, pp. 123–24.

Conflicts between Personal and Social Values: Significance for Public Education

By DOUGLAS S. WARD

THE following paper is intended to outline in tentative form some fragmentary ideas spawned by recent experience behind the Magnolia Curtain.[1] Discussions with B. J. Chandler (formerly a colleague at the University of Virginia and now Associate Professor of Education, Northwestern University) precipitated an examination of conflicts of personal-social values which confront not only segregationists and integrationists, but neutralists and bystanders who would prefer to be innocent and unaffected by the Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in public schools. It is apparent that the problem of value conflicts also has implications for teachers, supervisors, principals, and superintendents who face these conflicts as they work in public schools on both sides of the Magnolia Curtain.

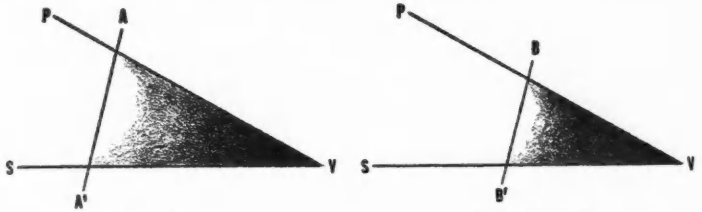
Competent teachers and other professional educational leaders possess personal and professional values which are sophisticated in the sense of being considered and generally defensible. The values related to education which are held by non-professionals who inhabit school and college communities are, in general, less considered and less defensible than those of professional educators. Values inherent in educational problems held by professional educators may be considered preferable to those held by non-professional groups in the community in which the educator practices his profession.

The two diagrams in Figure 1 crudely attempt to present an aspect of this relationship between values about education held by two professional educators and those held by non-professional people with whom each must continually interact. In each diagram the line *PV* indicates "personal values" held by the professional educator, and *SV* indicates "social values" held by non-professionals in the social situation in which he operates. *PV* is shown above *SV* because of the presumed superiority of the values held by professional educators. The divergence of the two lines is intended to represent professional situations in which varying degrees of value divergences are present. The shaded

[1] Magnolia Curtain: an invisible obstruction to intercommunication and mutual understanding between the American South and the rest of the U.S.A.

area which extends from the point where the lines *PV* and *SV* meet represents a condition presumed to be conducive to constructive interaction between the educator who holds the values indicated by the line *PV*, and the individuals and groups in a situation where values represented by *SV* prevail. The gradual lightening of the shaded area, as the distance from point *V* is increased and the gap between *PV* and *SV* widens, is intended to represent a progressively less favorable professional working situation.

Differences between personal and social values in real-life situations encountered by educators are by no means undesirable; in fact, value differentials of this type are implicit in the leadership rôle of the educator, whether serving as teacher, administrator, or professor. Professional self-realization for the educator apparently



Individual A Individual B

Fig. 1. The two diagrams represent the personal and social value differentials of Individual A and Individual B.

requires a working situation in which there is a differential between his values and those of the individuals and groups of individuals with whom he interacts professionally.

Assuming that values differentials are normal in the educator's working situation, it is, nevertheless, apparent that differences between the educator's values and those of colleagues, administrators, or school boards to whom he is responsible cannot be increased indefinitely without risking serious impairment of his professional effectiveness. Indeed, a "breaking point" can be expected to develop as value differences between the educator and his community increase. The line *A-A'* in the left diagram represents for *A*, a given professional educator, the point of value divergence which is too great to permit him to continue effective professional work. The nature of the "breaking point" must be taken into consideration for it is assumed that a break will eventually take place if the value differential continues to increase.

It is assumed that for every individual increasing differences between personal and social values result eventually in a condition which is called a "critical gap." The two diagrams in Figure 1 represent this situation for two individuals. According to the diagrams, Individual A can operate effectively in situations characterized by greater value differences than can Individual B.

The "critical gap," if it occurs, follows a highly individualized pattern as the illustrations are intended to indicate. The darker areas of the two diagrams in Figure 1, indicating potentially constructive interaction, are of uncertain extent, but may be expected to give way to less favorable conditions—indicated by lighter areas—for professional effectiveness as accompanying value differences increase. When differences between personal and social values reach this point, constructive professional relationships can be maintained only with difficulty. Under such conditions conscious or subconscious incompatibility with the professional working situation may develop. The educator loses effectiveness in the professional situation when his values have become incompatible with those of his professional community and constructive interaction is no longer possible.

OBSERVATION of value-conflict situations involving interaction of individuals and one or another of the many subcultures with which they interact suggests that a "critical gap" may be reached without the individual being aware of it. For example, school administrators in Virginia, who still find it necessary to accept politically dictated interpretations of the Supreme Court ruling on school segregation, apparently do not recognize the values *impasse* which confronts them. One administrator apparently was able to forget his previously stated values when he was forced to accept direction from state school officials whose values differed sharply from his own. In such cases, the individual may rationalize a shift in the pattern of his life activities or in his professional objectives which takes him out of conflict with the social values which are in marked contrast with his own.

A superintendent may throw his energies into a state or local political campaign—a not uncommon practice in some states behind the Magnolia Curtain. A principal who has enjoyed an enviable professional reputation becomes a *raconteur*, much in demand for occasions where the "clown" rôle is to be played. By securing recognition on the fringes of his professional life he avoids confronting the critical-gap situation and compensates for

lost professional status. Other individuals may throw their energies into raising orchids, refinishing antique furniture, or collecting minerals, butterflies, or blondes (presumably on a platonic basis). Genealogical studies, always popular behind the Magnolia Curtain, are reportedly being pursued with renewed vigor these days. Whatever the real or apparent adaptation to a critical value gap, the educator so confronted is unable to continue to work at his established level of professional effectiveness, although he may not be aware of it. He may attribute the spinning of his professional wheels to spring fever, the increased birth rate, or the absence of sufficient Federal aid to education.

Some educators react to potential or actual value gaps by shifting their own operating values so as to accentuate whatever differences may exist. The liberal may become a radical; the mild segregationist becomes a race bigot. The integrationist, faced by White Citizens Councils, may advocate the use of force to attain compliance with Supreme Court rulings, a position he had not taken previously; or a "modern" educator may become an "essentialist."

In school situations, the individual who reaches the "critical gap" point may react in any of the ways already noted or he may become a traditionalist or an extreme progressive. The superintendent or principal who can no longer manage the value differentials in his situation may become a tyrant, a "Milquetoast," or simply a *laissez faire* job-holder.

A superintendent whose educational values involve little consideration for those not bound for college finds his upper-class district transformed into a poorer working-class community. His unwillingness to provide leadership for a comprehensive school program for students of wide ability ranges and varied vocational goals constitutes a gap situation in critical values, for the community needs such programs. His adaptation to the value gap takes the form of meticulous attention to building maintenance, care of supplies, and the consequent neglect of professional leadership. (Some administrative behavior of this type may be entirely unrelated to values, and may reflect merely the identification of tasks which best suit the individual's talents.)

The fourth-grade teacher who finds it impossible to accommodate her conception of teaching to the demands of the fifth-grade teacher, the alleged incompetence of the third-grade teacher, and the expectations of parents may become compulsively protective

of "her children." She thus seeks to isolate her charges from the influence of educational ideas differing from her own. If this maneuver is successful, the effective values differential is reduced and the value gap narrowed. The professional effectiveness of the teacher will also be lessened.

A coach who comes to his job with strongly held values which emphasize the all-round development of individuals may find a community which values only a winning team. This educator may reconstruct his values, accommodating gradually to those forced upon him by the community so that no critical value gap develops. He may, however, recognize the incompatibility of his own and the community's values and resign, to seek a post in another community where value differences will not obstruct constructive interaction.

This recognition, of the common dilemma of individuals holding values about a crucial social policy (such as segregation) which are "out of step" with their immediate culture, was a sobering experience, although the tentative nature of the present interpretation is admitted. A value gap is potentially as disturbing to the individuals represented by the line *SV* as it is to the professional person (*PV*). A respected professor reacted to the school segregation decision by joining a pro-segregation "hate group." A liberal Virginian of impeccable lineage put aside his humanitarian values and retired from the school board on which he had served with courage and distinction. Each faced a situation involving a critical gap and they were, in a sense, fellow sufferers.

EDUCATIONAL programs concerned with the reorientation of attitudes and values Kurt Lewin has likened to "a change in the culture."[2] Teachers and other educators may be expected to develop intellectually supported values about their professional functions which are ahead of those of both their professional public and many of their associates. Professional values require a measure of support from the immediate culture, yet the professional worker may find himself in an environment which does not provide the reinforcement needed.

The competent professional may be expected to thrive in situations which present no greater value differences than he is prepared to cope with in normal interaction, which is both the

[2] Lewin, Kurt, and Grabbe, Paul. "Conduct, Knowledge, and Acceptance of New Values," *Journal of Social Issues*, I (August, 1945), p. 55.

meat and dessert of his calling. The professional who is confronted by critical values differences that do not permit healthy interaction may well be in need of support for his own values from a source outside his normal sphere of professional activity. How may the professional educator attain support which is essential to the maintenance of his values? Are procedures for meeting this need a legitimate concern of teacher-education programs?

The individual who mistakes normal differences in basic ideas within his school situation for a truly critical difference of values needs to identify the true facts of the situation, a process which may be fraught with difficulty. Among the most difficult cases, perhaps, is the educator who displays symptoms of having stumbled into a critical gap without being aware of it. (A special type of couch and a new species of analyst may be needed for summer-school and in-service programs of teacher education.)

If value gaps occur which are critical, in the sense referred to here, the planners of pre-service teacher education may have an obligation to promote directly an understanding of this social mechanism which probably occurs for a significant number of teachers, particularly in the early years of service. It would appear that beginning teachers are more likely to encounter critical-gap situations than are their well-integrated, experienced colleagues. (However, for administrators, the gravest dangers are apt to confront those longest in service, with long service in one situation.)

Warnings against "getting out of step" or "going too fast" are frequently issued to beginning teachers. Conflicts in basic ways of approaching the educational task are commonly discussed in programs of teacher education as "disadvantages" to be "overcome."

Practitioners engaged in programs of in-service teacher education often are confronted with the individual who is at the critical-gap stage and whose professional effectiveness is suffering. Such an individual needs help in analyzing the nature of the unique value conflicts in which he finds himself. If a critical gap is reached, the individual must restructure his values in order to re-establish satisfactory professional interaction with the social situation (and run the risk of lowering his professional sights), find another professional situation in which the value differences are not critical, or contrive some other (probably either rationalized or frankly escapist) solution of his problem. Indeed, the integrity of the educator as a person who faces such a situation

depends upon the genuinely satisfactory adjustment to a potentially disintegrating experience. The first recourse mentioned may be facilitated by identifying particular aspects of the professional situation which involve value differences clearly short of the critical-gap stage, in terms of which the individual may redirect his activities. (This procedure may be entirely consistent with the individual's most deeply held values.) In so doing the social waste of an avoidable change in jobs, or the threat to personal integrity of struggling hopelessly in a situation where constructive professional work cannot be carried on, may be avoided. (Such restructuring, of course, can be carried to ludicrous extremes and might produce the superintendent who checks school supplies.)

Teacher-education institutions may need new personnel and facilities to provide an adequate program to deal with individuals who find themselves in situations of the types referred to here.

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Design for a Non-Credit Workshop in Industrial Arts

By ROBERT W. HAWS

THE College and Department of Education of Ohio State University receive many requests for services from the school districts of the state. These requests include workshops for credit and for non-credit, regular courses at an off-campus location, building surveys, on-call assistance to school district self-surveys, and the like. Since the granting of credit for courses given at an off-campus location involves many complicated maneuvers, it appears that the non-credit workshop under the leadership of a University staff member as a consultant is one of the better ways in which the College and Department may render these much-needed services to the school districts of Ohio. It was to provide an actual example of this kind of activity that the following article was prepared.

The idea of a workshop for the industrial-arts teachers in the city of Lakewood grew out of a series of meetings held during the academic year 1956–57. These meeetings were held under local leadership with the result that a number of problems were identified and listed for further study. Since many of these problems focused on the course offerings, the workshop took the form of

curriculum revision and improvement with a written outline for each area of each grade level as the final outcome.

Early in the autumn of 1957 the writer was invited to meet with the Superintendent of Schools, the Director of Curriculum, the Director of Research and Guidance, and the Head of the Industrial Arts Department of the Lakewood high school for an exploratory meeting. At that time the activities of the previous year were reviewed, and the following plan of action was determined. It was agreed that the writer would serve as a consultant and would meet with all industrial-arts teachers once each month. Furthermore, the teachers agreed that they would hold a meeting between the visits made by the consultant for the purpose of carrying on committee assignments relative to the project. Reports from committees would be transmitted to the writer by the Director of Curriculum for review, criticism, and editing. They would then be returned to the committee through the Director of Curriculum for revision before presentation to the entire group for approval.

The matter of university credit did not enter into the situation. Since most of those involved already held graduate degrees, participation in the workshop carried credit toward salary increments on the professional-growth plan. This simplified the arrangements between the school and the consultant, thus avoiding any entanglements with university regulations concerning credits and registration.

For his services, the consultant received a flat *per diem* fee plus expenses for travel, lodging, and meals from the Board of Education of Lakewood. The number of meetings was left open since, at the outset, it was not possible to predict the exact number of meetings necessary to complete the project. The plan for each group meeting was that three sessions would be held each time the consultant came. On Friday, one meeting was held from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. and another from 7:00 to 9:00 P.M. A third session met from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M. Saturday morning. During the hour between the two Friday meetings lunch was served in the high-school cafeteria.

In order to acquaint himself with the programs in the several schools the writer spent one day visiting each teacher in each junior and senior high school prior to the first meeting of the entire group at 4:00 P.M. This plan was deemed to be essential to gain an understanding of the schools and the facilities.

THE first meeting was devoted to exploratory discussions of the several problems already referred to and getting ideas before the group on how these problems might best be attacked. Toward the close of the evening meeting, committees were established to consider the curriculum problems peculiar to each area. For example, a committee was established to deal with the development of a curriculum in metalwork from Grade VII through XII. Each committee was composed of teachers from both the junior- and senior-high school levels. In this way it was thought some degree of articulation might be accomplished. The following committeees were formed, one to deal with a general statement of philosophy compatible with that previously adopted by the Board of Education, a second to deal with woodworking at all grade levels, a third to study and report on drawing, and a fourth to report on metalworking. In situations where only one teacher was involved as in auto mechanics, foundry, electricity, and machine-shop practice, no committee was set up but the instructor was requested to prepare and present his course outline. Saturday morning was devoted to an examination of course outlines previously prepared and a discussion of how to proceed in the interim before the next meeting two months later. This long period between meetings, was thought desirable due to Christmas vacation, other scheduled meetings, and the ending of the first semester.

During this period each committee met several times and prepared preliminary statements. The committee on philosophy had its statement of position ready and presented it to the group for modification and subsequent approval. This was considered a necessary first order of business to obtain a frame of reference to guide the other committees in their planning.

A second Saturday meeting was devoted to the development of a form for each area committee to use when preparing course outlines and making plans for interim meetings of the several committees before the next meeting with the writer.

The third meeting, devoted to a study of the junior-high school curriculum as now constituted, arrived at a series of basic-experience areas to be offered in each of the three schools. Some course outlines were reviewed, revised, and approved.

At the fourth meeting more course outlines were submitted, revised, and approved. Perhaps the significant achievement of

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

A Highly Promising Project

One of the most important actions taken by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools at its recent meeting was the initiation of a program designed to help high schools identify their superior students and motivate and guide them into college work. The plan will operate for two years under a grant of $174,000 from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. J. Ned Bryan, Jr., now director of the National Education Association project on the Identification and Education of the Academically Talented Pupil in the American Secondary School, will be director and Bruce Shertezer, director of guidance and personnel in the Indiana State Department of Public Instruction, will be associate director. Science Research Associates will assist in planning and will provide necessary materials.

The program will start with the selection of some fifty to seventy-four schools in the nineteen states served by the Association to serve as "pilot plants." Preference will be given to schools willing to carry on a pilot program for the two years of the project, assign the personnel necessary to carry it on effectively, supply such information as may be needed in the study, and share ideas and experiences with other participating schools.

Each pilot school will be asked to send a team comprising an administrator and a counselor or teacher to one of the five five-day workshops which will be held this summer. Five universities—Colorado, Michigan, Minnesota, Oklahoma, and Northwestern—will serve as host institutions to these workshops. Follow-up sessions of the workshops will be held next summer. Two hundred scholarships of $50 each will be available as contributions to subsistence and travel expenses for those attending the workshop sessions.

The participating schools will try to identify students with talents which indicate that they should go on to higher education. Plans of such students for college attendance will be studied in an effort to discover factors that are significant in their thinking about this matter. Special effort will be made to learn why some

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Books to Improve College Reading Skill: A Review Essay

By JOHN R. KINZER

CARTER, HOMER L. J., and MCGINNIS, DOROTHY J. *Effective Reading for College Students.* New York: Dryden Press, Inc., 1957. xiv+354 pp.

DALLMAN, MARTHA, and SHERIDAN, ALMA. *Better Reading in College.* New York: Ronald Press Company, 1954. v+308 pp.

MILLER, LYLE L. *Increasing Reading Efficiency.* New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1956. vii+301 pp. (A teacher's manual is also available.)

DURING the past few years several self-help books have appeared which are directed toward the improvement of adult and college-level reading skills. This reviewer has chosen these three books as representative of the college level. Certain assumptions are made by the writers of these reading-improvement books; many of these assumptions are tacit and in some cases are not tenable.

One of the assumptions is that the college student desires to improve his reading skills. It is quite proper for a student to say that he desires to read well and study effectively, but counseling often reveals that this desire is not very strong and in many cases is completely lacking. A reading-improvement program that is not co-ordinated with counseling can only deal in the superficial and chiefly mechanical aspects of reading skills.

Other assumptions made by workbook writers are that a student is able to read but merely lacks speed, has a meager vocabulary, and lacks familiarity with organization of written materials.

Much has been said in reading-improvement workbooks on the topic "remembering." One sees there such admonitions as "when reading college assignments be on the watch for points that are worth remembering" (Dallman and Sheridan, page 221). This is a fine idea if one is familiar with the subject and knows what is worth remembering. The beginning student or the relatively inexperienced one cannot determine by a sheer effort of will to remember or even discover points that are worth remembering. The ability to remember is not a mechanical skill, but is a combination of skill and knowledge based on considerable experience.

"Critical reading" is a topic that is often considered in reading-improvement programs. One cannot be properly critical of anything until he knows something about it. Critical evaluation requires a mature system of values, attitudes, and knowledge. This is not a mechanical skill and is not something to be practiced from a workbook.

Reading-improvement programs are usually found in departments of psychology and education. This is a historical accident and is based on the fact that educators and psychologists have an interest in learning and habit formation as topics within their own disciplines.

It is the reviewer's opinion that the findings of psychologists and educators must eventually become useful in other subject-matter areas. The psychologist is interested in topics such as learning, remembering, and attitude formation, but someone else needs to apply those findings. The relationship between psychologist and English teacher, for example, is analogous to that which obtains between the physicist and the engineer. Reading is not a skill or even a group of skills learnable in isolation.

We are familiar with the generalization that "one learns to do by doing," but we do not take seriously the idea that "one learns to read by reading." No amount of meaningless exercise and mechanical drill can be a substitute for interesting excursions through many books. One learns to read rapidly by having a tremendous amount of reading to do. One learns to read and remember by having an interest in what he reads. I have always been amazed at the ease with which college boys remember girl friends' telephone numbers. I have been equally amazed at how easily they can forget the date of the War of 1812! This example should give the reading instructor some idea of the problem.

These books promise help in the improvement of reading. The Carter and McGinnis book covers too much territory and as a result is very disorganized. The book by Lyle L. Miller is limited but emphasizes, in my opinion, the wrong thing. He places entirely too much emphasis on trivia such as speed drills of perceptual material. The Dallman book has a virtue in that it contains good reading material; it also gives some techniques of vocabulary building based on wide reading.

I believe that the difficulty in teaching reading to adults and to college students is largely a matter of obtaining easy material of potential interest to persons of that age level. Concomitant with reading instruction must go counseling to help those people get a new orientation to adult values and attitudes.

READINGS

Books to Read

CRESSMAN, GEORGE R., and BENDA, HAROLD W. *Public Education in America: a First Course.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1956. xiv+480 pp.

These authors have prepared in this volume a textbook which is not only useful in a "first course," but which can be a valuable reference work in advanced courses. Unlike many introductory textbooks in education, this book speaks a language which is directed at mature and intelligent students and contains none of the "primer talk" so often found in works developed for orientation purposes.

A second unusual and valuable feature of this book is its scope. Careful descriptions of school-finance problems (pages 85–106), organization of the public-education enterprise (pages 47–83), school-plant facility problems (pages 335–65), and other task areas take the reader well beyond the content of the usual introductory textbook and provide excellent bases for future studies in almost any segment of the education profession.

Each chapter is introduced with a one-page "preview" which gives "the student in statement, not outline, form a look at what is to come. The preview . . . sketches the broad pattern of the chapter" (page v). These previews are well done and serve to whet the appetite rather than to provide a ready-made substitute for reading the text. Each chapter concludes with a number of excellent questions and projects, a list of pertinent audio-visual aids, and a comprehensive selected bibliography which are well done and which add significantly to the value of the chapter.

The major problem with the book is its comprehensiveness. It would not seem fair to the content nor to the student to attempt to compress the material into a single quarter or semester course. It is undoubtedly true that many teacher-education curriculums would need to be changed materially if this textbook were to be utilized to its full potential in an introductory manner. In the opinion of this reviewer, such changes would be worth the effort and a course based upon a year's study of this volume plus related field experiences could remove much of the stigma from present-day introduction courses in education.

JOHN E. CORBALLY, JR.

COLE, CHARLES C., JR. *Encouraging Scientific Talent.* New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1956. ix+259 pp.

This volume reports a study of the loss of talented persons from high school to college and of ways to encourage those who are more able to follow scientific study. The research was supported by the National Science

Foundation; it was based primarily on a questionnaire administered in connection with an aptitude test given to a nation-wide sample of high-school Seniors and Sophomores. In addition to the data gathered by the Educational Testing Service, other evidence was introduced into the report at many points.

Of the 59 items in the questionnaire, the first 20 concerned words and arithmetic. The remainder dealt with such matters as the size of the family of the respondent, the father's occupation and education, the college plans of the respondent's best friend, the nature of the high-school program being followed, the subjects preferred, career preferences, the contributions of high-school guidance to career choices, the need for scholarship help in college, reasons for going or not going to college, and factors affecting college choice.

The analysis of the questionnaire response when coupled with other evidence introduced in the report leads to several significant conclusions. Only a few can be cited here. Approximately two hundred thousand high-school graduates with college ability terminate their formal education with a high-school diploma; one-fourth of this group apparently have interest and aptitude in science. A significant portion of those with interest and aptitude would presumably continue with scientific pursuits if they could be identified and financial assistance provided. The loss of talented young women to science is proportionately greater than the loss of talented young men. Community and parental deterrents are significant factors in the decisions against going to college.

The report offers a number of recommendations, most of which are general in nature. No suggestions are offered as to the way in which "extensive federal and state legislation" for the benefit of science and mathematics teaching can be achieved. A nation-wide talent search to fill one hundred thousand proposed new scholarships to college is suggested with no apparent recognition of the relative inadequacy of presently available means of identification of worthy persons. It is unfortunate that the report passes over lightly the basis for a certain loss of talent: shortcomings of schools and colleges in both curriculum and method.

The report is significant to those who are seriously concerned with the rôle of science and engineering in our society. The new evidence obtained in the study is useful, and the report as a whole summarizes a broad array of fact and judgment, valuable alike to the scientist and the educator.

JOHN S. RICHARDSON

HANSEN, KENNETH H. *High School Teaching.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1957. x+421 pp.

This textbook in general methods of teaching in high school is addressed to the prospective teacher in training and the beginning teacher. Its specific purposes, as stated by the author, are:

> . . . helping the teacher understand what secondary education in our society really means *to the high school students themselves*;
> . . . helping to show the teachers how to use effective classroom teaching methods by applying known principles of human behavior and learning to specific classroom problems; and
> . . . helping the teacher to understand his rôle as an advanced leader of youth in school and community (page iv).

The author attempts to achieve these purposes by means of 14 chapters in three parts dealing with: Understanding the Tasks of Secondary Education; Classroom Teaching; and Beyond Classroom Walls. Each chapter concludes with "topics for study, discussion, and report," and an excellent, briefly annotated bibliography.

The style is lucid and simple, but the treatment of the various problems of method is frequently sketchy and brief, often so brief as to raise some doubt as to its effectiveness.

For the most part, the author presents a "right of center" point of view with respect to the controversies in the field of method. He is inclined, in the opinion of this reviewer, to be somewhat pessimistic as to the possibilities of the beginning teacher going much beyond the *status quo* in bringing about desirable changes in procedure. This does not mean, however, that the teacher should not experiment for, "within the framework of even the rather traditional classroom" (page 289), it is possible to bring about significant improvement.

While this extremely readable, attractively designed and illustrated volume should prove of great value to the beginning teacher, it would be highly desirable for him to consult many other sources in his quest for better teaching procedures. To this conclusion the author would probably agree.

HAROLD ALBERTY

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Design for a Non-Credit Workshop in Industrial Arts

[*Continued from page 133*]

this meeting was the development of a curiculum for a general shop at the high-school level to meet the needs of students who entered without industrial-arts credit or who wished to pursue some area of interest on an elective basis.

A fifth meeting has been arranged to edit the materials and plan for the publication of a curriculum bulletin to be placed in the hands of principals, counselors, and teachers of the school system.

As a result of this workshop experience the writer has reached some rather definite conclusions regarding the values to be derived from the type of workshop under consideration. These are:

The group was working on real problems which the members had isolated and expressed a desire and interest in solving.

These teachers were for the first time making an effort to articulate the work done in a single area from Grade VII through XII.

The quality and quantity of work done and the enthusiasm of the group were greater than that which one often meets in an organized campus class.

By bringing a whole department together, it was possible to adjust programs and promote understandings which additional summer courses on the part of one or more members of the group would never have effected.

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A Highly Promising Project

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students of high ability have no plans for college attendance and what can be done to motivate them in this direction. The effect of non-school influences on college attendance will be studied and effort will be made to stimulate students, parents, and community groups to help increase college attendance by able young people.

THE initiation of this project is highly encouraging for a number of reasons. The need for a larger percentage of the abler students to attend college has been pointed out so many times that it needs no discussion here. The problem is one of concern to both colleges and secondary schools, and both should co-operate in dealing with it. The North Central Association is an organization of 388 colleges and universities and 3,416 secondary schools and has a long history of co-operation between these two types of its member institutions. Moreover, the Association has high prestige with the secondary schools, colleges, and state departments of education of its region. It is therefore in an excellent position to carry out an undertaking of this kind. This is a highly promising project.

R. H. E.

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